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Superintendent

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The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) Title I program announces notice of funds that will make it possible to fund three state Even Start Family Literacy (ESFL) programs. The ESFL Guidance requires that all existing programs must re-compete with other community entities every fourth year. Three state-funded programs will complete a four-year cycle June 30, 2009. These three programs are eligible to apply for funds in this competition. This competitive grant process will begin with a Bidder's Conference for all interested community teams on Tuesday, April 21, 2009. See details on registration form. Members of the team should consist of representatives from one or more non-profit community-based organizations, one or more school districts, public agencies other than a school district, institutions of higher education, or public/private nonprofit organizations.

The purpose of the ESFL program is to help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by improving the educational opportunities of the nation's low-income families by integrating early childhood education, adult literacy or adult basic education, and parenting education into a unified family literacy program. To accomplish these goals Even Start collaborates with schools, communities, and public agencies to coordinator services for program participants.

The 2009 Request for Proposals and Application will be posted on the OPI, Federal Programs, Even Start Web site (<http://www.opi.mt.gov/EvenStart/Index.html>). If you have questions, call Gwen Smith at 406-444-5660 or e-mail Joan Morris at jmorris@mt.gov.

Timeline for Grant Process

April 21, 2009	Bidder's Conference for eligible community teams interested in submitting a proposal
May 8, 2009	Deadline for proposal submission
May 2009	State preview and convening of panel to review and rate applications
May 15, 2009	Official notification of grant approvals to successful projects
July 1, 2009	Program year begins

"It is the mission of the Office of Public Instruction to improve teaching and learning through communication, collaboration, advocacy, and accountability to those we serve."